

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION**  
**December 5, 2006**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners John M. Hyk (Chairman) and Amy R. Fowler (Charles G. Boetsch absent.) Also present was Communications Director Owen Smith, Chief Deputy Robert Keating, Deputy Treasurer Karen Trussell, and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau.

Commissioner Hyk informed those present that he could not open the meeting yet because he had just spoken with Commissioner Fowler by telephone and had learned that she would not be able to arrive until closer to 10:00 a.m. The Chief Deputy and Communications Director agreed to come back at that time.

J. Hyk convened the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

**FY 2007 OVERLAY:**

As the Chief Deputy and Communications Director had not yet arrived, the Commissioners discussed the overlay for FY 2007. The recommendation from the Treasurer's Office was to set the overlay at \$120,000.00 for FY 2007.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, J. Hyk seconded setting the overlay for FY 2007 at \$120,000.00. Passed unanimously.**

**HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL FOR FY 2007 & FUTURE COMMITTEE:**

Present for this discussion with the Commissioners was Human Resources/Payroll Director Michelle Wadsworth. The Commissioners briefly discussed the Budget Committee's decision to fund the health insurance request at \$944,000.00. Because there was enough funding to keep the health insurance plan as currently set up, with a 16.9% increase, the Commissioners voted as follows:

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, J. Hyk seconded renewing the health insurance plan for 2007 as presented by AETNA. Passed unanimously.**

Chief Deputy Robert Keating and Communications Director Owen Smith arrived later and inquired about the decision. The Commissioners stated that they had voted to renew the same plan for FY 2007.

R. Keating, on behalf of the employees, thanked the Commissioners for "fighting" for the benefits and salaries and stated that he knew the employees appreciated this.

J. Hyk quoted former Commissioner Jethro Pease, who stood up during the Public Hearing on December 1, 2006 and stated, "You should not take benefits away from employees." J. Pease had emphasized that the "grandfathered" employees had been hired with the understanding that this benefit came with the job. Those employees hired after 2003 knew they would have to pay a portion of dependent coverage when they came to work for the County. R. Keating concurred with this sentiment, stating, "It really has been an agreement between the Commissioners and the employees."

The Commissioners and those present discussed the Budget Committee's directive to form a committee to look at finding ways to stem the trend in rising costs of health insurance for the County employees. The Commissioners recalled that there had been some volunteers to serve on this committee, including Budget Committee member Richard McLaughlin, Deputy Treasurer Karen Trussell and Sheriff Scott Story. O.

Smith volunteered to serve as well. The Commissioners directed that Probate Clerk Judy Nealley be asked if she would be willing to serve. They further instructed Human Resources/Payroll Director Michelle Wadsworth and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau to serve on the committee. It was recommended that Lincolnville citizen Robert Hammer be asked to serve as well because of his interest in County government. Both A. Fowler and J. Hyk agreed that all three Commissioners should be involved, perhaps on a rotating basis. It was acknowledged that the committee should start working early in the year to study possible alternatives such as self-insurance, etc.

#### **SHERIFF'S REPORT:**

Present with the Commissioners was Chief Deputy Robert Keating, Human Resources/Payroll Director Michelle Wadsworth and Communications Director Owen Smith. The following was discussed with the Commissioners:

Detective Gregory Stearns has requested a leave of absence from December 23, 2006 to January 23, 2007 in order to try out another position. R. Keating stated that the Sheriff's Office felt that after sixteen years of dedicated service performing the difficult work of handling cases involving sex offenders and child abusers, Detective Stearns should have this opportunity. R. Keating assured the Commissioners that this would not affect the Sheriff's Department and they would not fill his position right away.

The Commissioners briefly consulted with M. Wadsworth regarding policy and then voted as follows:

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, J. Hyk seconded to approve Gregory Stearns' request for leave of absence from December 23, 2006 through January 23, 2007. Passed unanimously.**

#### **MILAGE RATE:**

It was noted that the Budget Committee reduced the 2007 mileage reimbursement for all departments because they were not in favor of the County's current mileage reimbursement rate of 48.5 cents per mile. The IRS had increased the allowance up to that amount in 2005 due to the rising cost of fuel and later decreased it, unbeknownst to the County Commissioners. It is now reported that starting in 2007 the IRS will again allow up to 48.5 cents per mile for reimbursement of personal vehicle use for work-related purposes.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

Present for this report with the Commissioners was County Clerk Barbara Arseneau.

1. B. Arseneau reminded the Commissioners that the site survey for the Aborn Hill Tower property had not yet been completed. The quote was for \$1,800.00, which was to be paid for out of the Professional Services line. She informed them that this would overdraw that account, but it would appear that other unspent funds in the Commissioners budget should cover this overdraft. The Commissioners agreed to overdraw that line.
2. B. Arseneau requested that she be allowed to carry over approximately 21 hours of unused 2006 vacation leave into 2007. The Commissioners granted the extension.
3. The MACo Legislative Subcommittee position has still not been filled by a Waldo County employee.

**2007 PAY SCALES:**

The Commissioners briefly reviewed and signed the FY 2007 pay scales at the request of H.R./Payroll Director Michelle Wadsworth.


**MINUTES APPROVED:**

**\*A. Fowler moved, J. Hyk seconded approving the 2006 minutes from the September 11<sup>th</sup>, September 26<sup>th</sup> and October 10<sup>th</sup> Commissioners Court Sessions along with the November 14, 2006 Yates vs. Palermo Tax Abatement Hearing. Passed unanimously.**

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next Commissioners Court Session is scheduled for December 12, 2006. *(Note: This was later changed to December 5, 2006, with another meeting to follow on December 19, 2006.)*

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, J. Hyk seconded adjourning the meeting at 10:30 p.m. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted by   
Waldo County Clerk